

ABSTRACT

Anchored conversations are maintained by a conversation coordinator that retrieves an anchor position from an artifact and maintains a position of a conversation client relative to the retrieved anchor position. The conversations are synchronous and asynchronous communications. The anchors, and hence the conversations may be moved within the artifact or to other artifacts. The conversation clients include detach and re-attach buttons that allow a conversation to be detached and reattached from/to a corresponding anchor. The conversation coordinator manages conversations anchored in any number of different applications. Each conversation is accessible either by invoking an associated anchor within a corresponding artifact (embodied as an ActiveX control, for example), or via the conversation coordinator. A database is connected to each conversation and is a silent participant maintaining a record of the conversation and any metadata regarding the conversation. The database is available for query by a user and/or the conversation coordinator.